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GEOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CIA/RR-GM-62-7
June 1962

THE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

(Revision of CIA/RR GM-10, 8 October 1958)



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

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THE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

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Since the evacuation of their remaining holdings off Chekiang Province early in 1955, the Nationalist position on the China coast has pivoted on a heavily fortified island and its others, only lightly defended, which fringe Peking Province. These offshore islands, in association with almost 50 uninhabited islets and numerous rocks, are distributed along two major aggregations: the Quemoy group, situated adjacent to the harbor of Amoy, and the Matsu complex, to the north, lying off the estuary of the Min Ching (river) and the port of Fouchow. Located midway between these two groups are the Wu-ch'iu Islands, which are also in Nationalist hands but are of small extent and obvious significance.

The Quemoy group, by virtue of its size and position, constitutes the Nationalist presence in China. These islands have a land area of 76 square miles or 81 percent of the total offshore territory currently held by Nationalist China. About 66,000 troops are stationed on the islands in addition to the 17,000 civilian population -- 73 and 76 percent of the respective offshore totals. With respect to position, Quemoy and its satellite islets can hardly be termed "offshore" since they are situated squarely astride the entrance to a 30-square-mile embayment known as Amoy Harbor. From this position, commanding the deepwater channel to Amoy Harbor, the Nationalists have been able to restrict the shipping of the once-bustling port and have prevented it from becoming a naval base.

Of the estimated 13,000 civilians on Quemoy, approximately 60 percent are farmers, who raise sweet potatoes, some small grains and vegetables, and high-grade poultry and eggs. Most of the remainder is engaged in offshore fishing. The civilian population is 50 to 60 percent self-sufficient in food, and additional supplies, especially rice, must be imported from Taiwan. Seasonal shortages of drinking water are also of some concern.

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*Civilian population figures for the Offshore Islands are the same as those given in CIA/RP 26-10, 9 October 1959, because later authoritative information is not available.

**All water distances mentioned in this report are expressed in terms of nautical miles. (1 nautical mile equals approximately 1.15 statute miles.)

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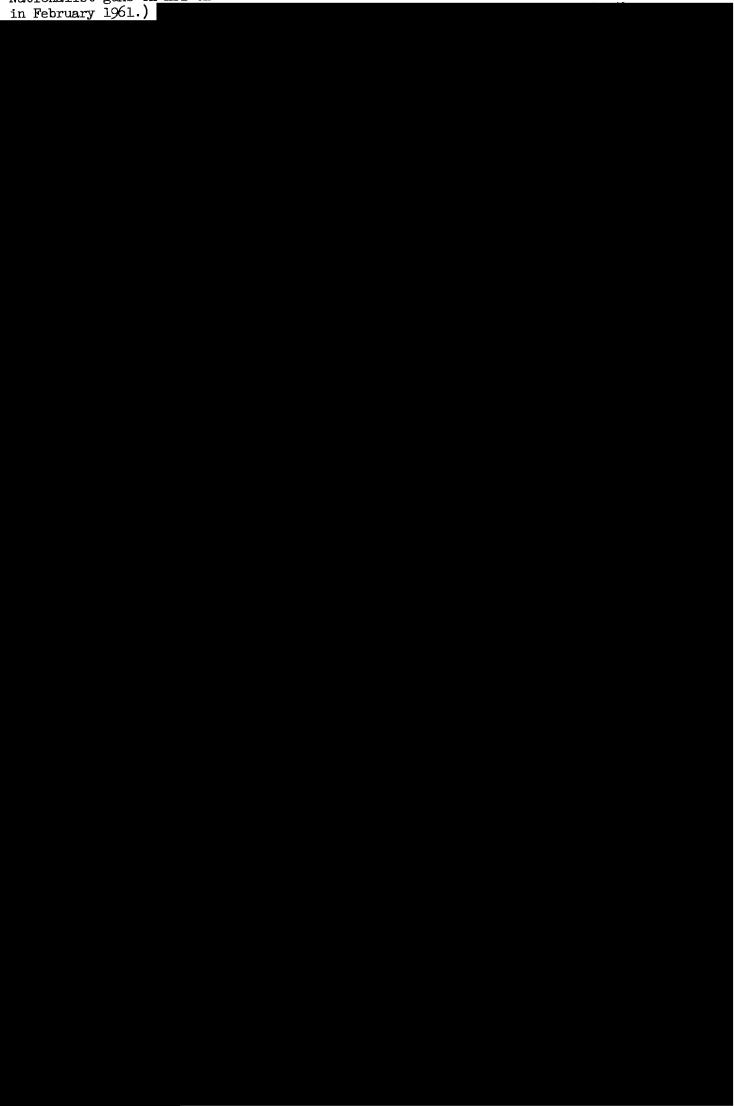
Further north the three routes of access to the port of Fouchow are dominated by islands of the Matsu complex. From the north, shipping to Fouchow must pass between Tai-ling Tzu-tzu (pillboxes) and Ma-sha Lin-tzu-tzu (islands); from the east, the route lies between Ma-tzu Lin-tzu-tzu and Tai-ch'uan Lin-tzu-tzu (White Mages); and, in the south, between Tai-ch'uan Lin-tzu-tzu and the mainland. From these Nationalist-held islands, traffic entering the Min Ching estuary and bound for Fouchow can

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be observed and intercepted. (Shelling of a Foochow-bound British merchant ship by Nationalist guns on Hsi-chuan Island in the Pai-ch'uan Lieh-tao group was reported in February 1961.)



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Project No. 61-2021

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Totals	<u>44</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8</u>

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ATTENTION : [REDACTED] 25X1A
FROM : Chief, Publications Staff, ORR
SUBJECT : Dissemination of CIA/RR GM 62-7, Revision
of CIA/RR GM-10, The Offshore Islands,
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2. You will receive 450 copies of GM 62-7 for distribution. These copies will commence with copy 51. Please make distribution as follows:

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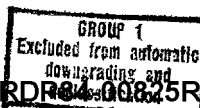
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Geography Division, ORR

Project Initiation Memorandum

Project No.: 61.2021

Date: 22 June 1962

1. Subject of Proposed Project: The Offshore Islands
2. Statement of Problem: To update CIA/RR GM-10, The Offshore Islands, dated 8 October 1958, which evaluated the importance and defensibility of each of the Chinese Nationalist-held islands.
3. Requester: Self-initiated. 25X1A 25X1A
4. Responsible Analysts: Messrs. [REDACTED] (GG/F), [REDACTED] (GG/F), and [REDACTED] (ONE) 25X1A
5. Kind and Extent of Cooperation Desired From:
 - a. Other Divisions of the G Area: D/GC will update maps that were a part of CIA/RR GM-10.
 - b. Other Parts of CIA: Routine Agency facilities will be used.
6. Estimated Manhours in D/GC: 50
7. Probable Completion Date: 27 June 1962.
8. Probable Form of Final Publication: CIA/RR GM 62-7
9. Comments: Project placed on crash basis by direction of the DD/I. The Memorandum to be controlled NOFORN. A total of 500 copies to be printed (200 more than the standard distribution list).

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Chief, Geography Division

Approved:

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Chief, Geographic Research

Assistant Director, ORR

27 June 1962
Date

28 June 62
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